

# ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS

ALASKA STATE MUSEUM, JUNEAU ❖ SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM, SITKA

## PRESS RELEASE

### Alaska State Museum

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** through Sept. 25

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This release is available online at: [www.museums.state.ak.us/press/munoz.htm](http://www.museums.state.ak.us/press/munoz.htm)

## Rie Muñoz Retrospective Closing

Sept. 25 is the final day to see the retrospective exhibition of Rie Muñoz's art at the Alaska State Museum. Muñoz, one of Alaska's most recognized artists, is widely celebrated for her warm and whimsical interpretations of everyday life across this vast state. The exhibit is a retrospective look at her more than 50-year career, featuring original paintings, tapestries, and memorabilia. The exhibition opened May 13 and ends Sept. 25.

Muñoz, a long-time Juneau resident who received a 2004 Governor's Award for the Arts, has been drawing and painting scenes of everyday life in Alaska since the early 1950s. Her stylized and colorful work is easily recognized. She is best known for her watercolor paintings, but she has also produced lithographic, stencil and silkscreen prints as well as murals and stained glass works. Several books have documented her art and her illustrations enliven children's books and many other publications nationwide.

Muñoz's prints adorn the walls of homes across the United States. Her work is carried by more than 150 galleries in the Pacific Northwest and Canada. In 1999 she received an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities degree from the University of Alaska.

Originally from Southern California, Muñoz first came to Alaska in 1950 on a tour ship. While visiting Juneau, she decided to see if she could find a job. She did, and has lived in Alaska ever since. She married, and in 1951-52 worked as a teacher on King Island in the Bering Sea, a formative experience for her. She later raised a son and held a number of arts-related jobs before deciding to devote herself full time to her art in 1972.

Muñoz's experiences on King Island attracted her to the traditional culture of Alaska's Native peoples, especially the Yup'ik people of Western Alaska. Her sketching trips to this area provided material for numerous paintings depicting every-day subsistence life. Muñoz has also sought to show the ordinary, everyday events that define life in Southeast Alaska, such as bathing in warm springs, riding ferries, fishing, picking berries, and walking dogs. She has an artist's eye and a cartoonist's wit that details the characters of the people she depicts.

“Many Alaskans have unwittingly been subjects and inspiration for my paintings,” Muñoz says. “For instance, if you were in Tenakee when the humpback whales were performing in front of town a few summers ago, it’s likely you’re in the painting ‘Whales in the Inlet’.” The artist maintains a second residence in the town of Tenakee, on Chichagof Island, accessible from Juneau only by small plane or ferry.

The museum remains on summer hours through Sept. 25. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. Winter hours begin Sept. 26. Hours will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, except holidays. General admission is \$5 in the summer, \$3 in winter. Visitors 18 and under are admitted free of charge. An annual pass that allows unlimited visits to the Alaska State Museum and the Sheldon Jackson Museum in Sitka is available for \$15.

Assistance is available for visitors with special needs. Please contact Visitor Services at 465-2901 before the visit.

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Images from the exhibition are available. Contact Mark Daughhetee at 465-4819.

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